TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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The Christian Faith and Modern Agriculture*

WESLEY A. HOTCHKISS

• The rural church movement in our country was born in a period in which agriculture differed greatly from its present form. At the beginning of this century farming was a way of life in which a farm family could create the good life almost within the boundaries of its own farm. It was still very much earthbound and distinct. The human values of this kind of agrarian life could be spoken to directly from the agrarian idiom of Scripture. The agricultural parables, for example, spoke directly to the farmer without much exegesis.

I see little evidence that the rural church movement is conscious of the rapid extinction of the way of life which prevailed at the beginning of the movement. Pick up any of the still current but slightly dusty books on rural life. They all emote about the Bible as a "rural book"; its garden scenes, its herds and flocks, its stables and countrysides.

Being a rural man, I have a certain sentimental emotional response to this sort of thing, but one question keeps coming to my mind: Why, when these ancient spiritual ancestors dreamed of the life hereafter, did they dream of a Holy *City*? Apparently, even among these solid rural citizens, they had difficulty staying down on the farm once they'd seen Gomorrah!

It could be pointed out also that most of these ancient semites were camel riders. I'm surprised that some great thinker in the rural movement hasn't promoted camel riding as a spiritually superior type of transportation.

Reappraisal Needed

The rural church movement, by its sentimental attachment to a certain human situation, is relegating itself to the periphery of the present-day theological conversation. The agrarian way of life, within which the rural movement has made its most dramatic witness, is past. Unless this movement recovers its theological imperatives, and then reappraises the agricultural situation in terms of these imperatives, it will stay on the sidelines of a truly significant resurgence of the Christian witness.

Let us take a little deeper look at what I consider to be an error in the way in which the rural church movement has looked at rural life. We human beings are always making the mistake of defining the good life in terms of our culture and then wrapping the Christian faith around it as a kind of spiritual cloak. Rural churchmen have been guilty of this. It is the Christian faith which establishes the values. Rural society is

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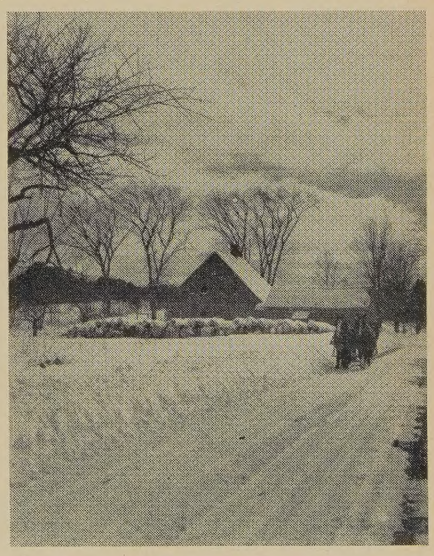

Photo by Philip Gendreau, N. Y.

* From an address at the 19th Annual Conference for Town and Country Pastors and their Wives, Pennsylvania State University, June 17, 1957.

In This Issue

• Wesley A. Hotchkiss, who writes about "The Christian Faith and Modern Agriculture"—Page 1—is national director of town and country church work for the Congregational-Christian Churches, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York, and recently appointed chairman of the National Council of Churches' Department of Town and Country Church.

• "Notes for Town and Country Pastors"—Page 4—was contributed by William G. Jamison, Professor at Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

• On Page 5, we present the fifth article in a series of "Notes on Recollections," by Dr. Benson Y. Landis, staff member of the National Council of Churches' Bureau of Research and Survey.

• For a description of the Iowa State College's plan of awarding annual certificates of merit to "rural" churches, read "Spotlighting Church-Community Relationships," by W. H. Stacy—Pages 7-10.

• The program of community development through education being carried out by the University of Nebraska is depicted on Pages 12-14.

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Photo by Eva Luoma

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

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under the judgment of God. It is both good and evil and in itself it can neither redeem nor condemn man.

This may be heresy for a person who is professionally within the rural church movement, but I do not believe there is anything inherently redemptive in the smell of new mown hay. So long as the rural church movement has a theology based upon the redemptive qualities of new mown hay it is neither expressing the ancient faith nor is it speaking realistically to the modern rural man.

Characteristics

What, then, does the Christian faith have to say to present day rural America?

In order to answer this question from within the faith it is necessary to review some of the characteristics of modern rural society.

Let us look at some of the things that are happening to agriculture. The last half century has seen agriculture come from a self-sufficient and isolated way of life to an integral part of our complex national economy. Davis and Hinshaw* estimate the agricultural enterprise to be a 90 billion dollar segment of our economy. This *agribusiness*, as these authors have named it, is divided in the following way: 16 billion to service and supply the farmer; 14 billion to the farmer for his produce; 60 billion for transporting, storing processing and merchandising.

Modern agriculture has spread out and infused itself into our whole intricate economy. Farming runs the whole economic gamut from steel mills in Detroit to the ad men on Madison Avenue.

This is more than an economic fact. It means that the farm family is accepting the same general definition of the good life which underlies our whole culture. This definition includes a certain combination of things which cost money. It means that the farm family cannot *create* the good life, in these generally defined terms, from the resources within its own fences. It has to *buy* the good life, and when a farm family sets out to buy its concept of the good life, it has joined the common materialistic struggle to "get ahead." This is where agriculture as a way of life, distinct from the rest of our culture, ends. This is where the new agribusiness begins.

Facets of Our Faith

Even though agribusiness has replaced the older forms of farming, there still are certain human qualities peculiar to the setting within which the agribusinessman lives which can be spoken to. Let us look at these, not as redemptive values, but as social situations to which the faith speaks. We start with the Christian faith, not with environmental situations.

First is the central event of our faith which is the fact that God inhabited the world in a unique way through the event of Jesus Christ. For Christians this becomes the focal point of history. We reinterpret all that went before in the light of this event, and likewise we see that all that has come after has new meaning. For each person who comes to faith in God through Christ, this event is the new creation. When a person becomes a new creature in Christ, he sees all the creation in a new light.

This discovery of faith becomes the unifying force for life, giving integrity and wholeness to an otherwise shattered existence.

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* John Davis and Kenneth Hinshaw, *Farmer in a Business Suit,* Simon and Schuster, 1957.

Every one of our cities is surrounded by a ring of ex-urbanites who are in a vaguely defined search for meaning. These people should be included in the witness of the Christian faith to the wholeness of creation. While our farmers are getting into business suits, the city men are getting into overalls. The exurbanite is trying to put himself together by puttering in petunias. The incarnate Christ is in the world, and the church should help both the commercial farmer and the hobbyist to make the connection between the wholeness in Christ and the symbolic integrity of growing things.

The second facet of our faith which I would like to hold up is the centrality of the earth in the whole scheme of salvation. This concept arises out of the basic concept of incarnation. God came into the real world of human beings and transformed his creation. This salvation accepts the fact that we are earthbound creatures, and the Lord of creation is able and willing to recreate us and the world around us through Christ. In these events God has demonstrated not only his sovereignty over his creation, but his redeeming love for his earthbound human creatures. The abundant life lies in this discovery of the love and sovereignty of God and of the whole new creation within which we live.

Our dependence upon the earth is more obvious and direct in some vocations than others. For those engaged in the extractive industries, our earth dependence may be more apparent. But even here a commitment to the faith is the avenue by which a person comes to the new creation.

The third point rises directly from the first two. This is the sacramental quality of life lived within the faith. A sacrament is a life ritual in which some element of the natural world is held up to God in recognition of his sovereignty and his redeeming love. A sacrament is a symbolic drama of adoration; a celebration of our creaturehood redeemed through Christ. Through some ancient and universal symbols the community of faith declares that a certain relationship exists between God, man and the natural world.

For the person who lives by the calling of God all of life becomes a continuous sacrament in which the believer holds up to the Creator the things which he has appropriated for his livelihood. The liturgy of the sanctuary symbolizes for him the actual situation of the real world. The daily work is an extension of the liturgical sacrament.

There is another aspect to the sacramental view of life. When the believer truly understands the nature of sacrament he is behaving as an artist; he looks at nature as an artist looks at his medium. The sculptor looks at a piece of marble, not as a problem to be solved but as a medium for creation. The sacramental view of life is very similiar. Life is not a problem to be solved, rather it is a medium for creation, since we, ourselves, are newly created. The abundant life to which Jesus referred has an aesthetic quality about it.

The secular agribusinessman sees farming as a technical problem to be solved—a mere matter of biochemistry, selective breeding, and a shrewd analysis of markets. The Christian farmer sees his calling as all these things plus a participation with God in a creative process. Only through the eyes of faith can the modern farmer see the holiness of the earth. The earth is holy only to twice-born men.

This message of our faith is not peculiar to agriculture. Our whole culture is based upon know-how, devoid of its aesthetic qualities. We

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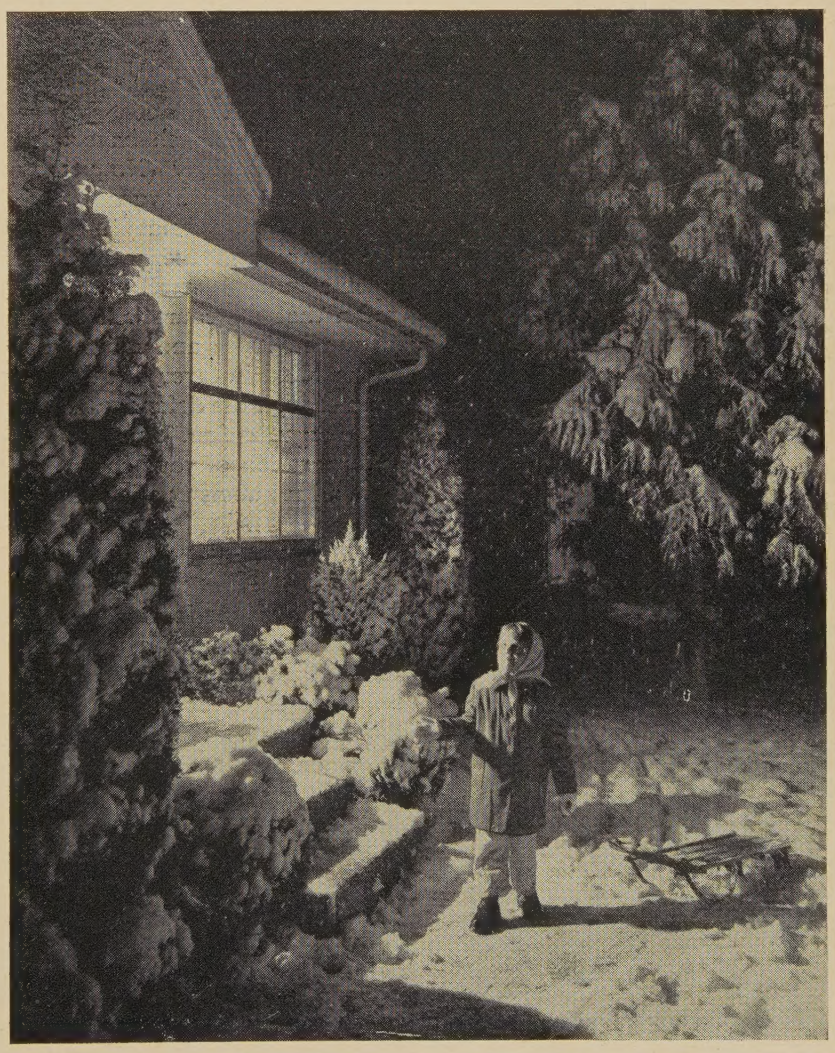

Photo by A. Devaney, N. Y.

Notes for Town and Country Pastors

WILLIAM G. JAMISON

• Town and country churches usually cannot afford elaborate and expensive audio-visual equipment. The usual visual aid is the flat picture, which accompanies church school curriculum materials. Flat pictures are one of the best visual aids, but church school teachers often fail to use them properly or adequately.

Informative Classroom Pictures Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan, has published an excellent booklet on how and why we use flat pictures. It is entitled "How to Teach with Pictures." You may obtain the booklet for ten cents. Use it in your teacher-training sessions. It should help considerably in making lesson teaching more effective.

* * *

Speaking of visual aids. . . . One of the most abused is the church bulletin board. When was the last time you changed yours? Put something new and important on yours each week to promote interest, otherwise parishioners will get into the habit of ignoring it. Also use varieties of colors. A twenty-five cent packet of varied-colored construction paper to use behind notices can brighten an otherwise dull bulletin board. It is a good project for youth, particularly.

If you don't have a bulletin board, here is an inexpensive one: Obtain a piece of beaver board (sometimes called Celotex) from your lumber dealer. It comes in 4 by 8 foot pieces. Cut it down to proper size. Cover one side with monk's cloth (it comes in several colors). Place a moulding about the edges. You have an A-1 bulletin board. You can use it in church classrooms, too. It has acoustical properties and makes a wonderful bulletin board for the children (provided it is low enough).

* * *

Many will recall the various conservation experiments of the mid-thirties. One of the largest was the planting of millions of trees in a north-south line through the Dakotas and Nebraska. Did the experiment work? Did the trees survive in that treeless area? Have they aided in controlling wind and water erosion and in offering wildlife protection?

Natural History magazine says "yes." The coniferous trees in particular have proven hardy and are providing important protection. Rows of such trees give wind protection to leeward belts twenty times the height of the trees. This wind reduction reduces evaporation, thus conserving moisture.

* * *

Does your church have adequate liability insurance? (Note: the question asks if you have *adequate* liability insurance, not just do you have any?) Because your church is open-country or small town does not mean that the court will be lenient in a suit. More and more cases are being ruled in favor of the plaintiff, even though the defendant is a charitable organization. This also suggests incorporation of your church, otherwise all members are liable.

* * *

Here are some facts which remind one that he cannot always be sure that all of his congregation is familiar with or understands his sermon illustration: In an average congregation on a typical Sunday morning you may expect no more than two-thirds will remember what conditions were like prior to World War II or during the Great Depression. Less than twenty per cent will remember anything about World War II. The average I.Q. will be around 100.

* * *

This has been mentioned before in this journal, but it is well worth repeating: Be sure to obtain the current listing of 16 mm motion pictures available from the Farm Film Foundation, 1731 Eye Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. This non-profit organization provides free films of all types suitable for town and country churches and community groups.

* * *

Heating bill too high? Maybe it is because your ceiling is too high. Two years ago a Wisconsin church board decided its sanctuary ceiling was too high. It was lowered and insulated. Result: thirty per cent reduction in fuel bill. It improved lighting, too.

Boy Scout Week

• More than 4,700,000 Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts Explorers, and adult leaders throughout the nation will observe Boy Scout Week, February 7-13, marking the 48th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

Boy Scout Week sees the launching of a yearlong Safety Good Turn suggested by President Eisenhower, Honorary President of the Boy Scouts of America.

Boy Scout Sunday will be observed in churches of all faiths on Sunday, February 9, with Scouts attending services in uniform. Scouts who have qualified for the religious awards of their faiths will be honored.

On this 48th birthday, the Boy Scouts will begin a National Safety Good Turn movement, which will reach into every community.

In round figures, there are now 3½ million boys in Scout uniform. This number represents a fair-sized portion of the country's young population, and working with these boys are some 1 and 1/3 million adults as volunteer leaders.

Suggested Prayer for a Preacher

• O Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff; and nudge thou me when I have said enough.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Notes on Recollections

V. The American Country Life Association

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• In the fall of 1922, I attended the annual meeting of the American Country Life Association held at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York. There I first saw Kenyon L. Butterfield, Mabel Carney, Nat T. Frame, Henry Israel, and others with whom I was later to be associated for long periods. The Association also brought me into contact with E. L. Lindeman, Carl C. Taylor, Henry C. Taylor, A. R. Mann and many more. At the 1922 meeting I recall that Aaron Sapiro spoke in glowing terms of the farmers' cooperative marketing movement.

At that time, too, E. C. Lindeman arose in a discussion to say that he had never had any formal schooling except as an adult. He had entered the Michigan State College at about age 22 with no training in reading or writing. He made a plea for emphasis on informal discussion groups in adult education. This was at the time when the term adult education was getting into circulation more frequently than in earlier years.

Henry Israel, who had earlier been one of the pioneers in the county (rural) work of the Y.M.C.A., had returned from post-war service among German students. It was announced that he would become the first full-time secretary of the Association, with an office in New York. The Association, which had been organized in January, 1919, or just after World War I, was formed mainly on the initiative of Kenyon L. Butterfield, then president of the Massachusetts College of Agriculture. Dr. Butterfield had also been a member of the Commission on Country Life, appointed by Theodore Roosevelt in 1908.

The Association was formed as a sort of "conference body." It would encourage discussion of aims and methods of rural social improvement, disseminate information and otherwise aid in rural improvement. It was at first frankly a gathering of the non-technical or non-economic rural leadership. Persons interested in rural public education, the rural church, rural health, rural recreation, were prominent in early sessions. Later a number of economists came in, and persons prominent in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the agricultural extension service. Youth groups were soon added, and student country life clubs.

Early in 1923, Henry Israel asked me to lunch, and requested me to aid in editing a new monthly periodical, *The Country Life Bulletin.* It was to be mainly a digest of what was appearing in farm and other journals. It was to include reviews of both pamphlets and books. Since I had had some experience in summarizing the writings of churchmen, I thought perhaps I could summarize the outpouring of genius from the rural social leadership. Shortly thereafter the paper was renamed, *Rural America,* and became a sixteen-page monthly, that I edited until 1941.

I found refreshing the early meetings of this small company that explored issues on a broad basis. I recall especially the gathering in 1927 at the Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan, to which Dr. Butterfield had gone. The National meeting was accompanied by an International Country Life Conference, at which appeared speakers from Canada, England, Denmark, Germany, and other nations. I recall that some of these speakers read long lists of organizations that had appointed them as representatives, and for which they spoke. I recollect, too, that when a Dane arose, he said: "I represent no one but myself, not even my wife who is here with me."

I heard a former Methodist speak, now from the United Church of Canada. He gave a vivid description of the formation of the church union there. He made mention of the large

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role of the rural churches of the West, which had decided to unite their forces, and thus brought pressure upon Toronto and the East. The United Church was a merger of Methodist, Congregational, and a portion of the Presbyterian congregations.

Liberty Hyde Bailey spoke at the annual dinner of the Association in East Lansing. He was mellow and benign. He told of his early years in pioneer Michigan, mentioning that his father thought he would train him to drive a team of horses for a living. Dr. Bailey said when he was a student at Michigan State it was necessary to stop at the President's house to get permission to walk into the village. In 1931, Dr. Bailey served as president of the Association, when the meeting was held in the summer at Cornell.

Two rural sociologists from whom I learned much through Association affairs were Dwight Sanderson of Cornell, and Carl C. Taylor, whom I first met at North Carolina, and who later headed the division of farm population and rural life of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. C. J. Galpin was already an elder statesman who always gave good advice humbly, when I began my work for A.C.L.A.

In 1929 I became executive secretary, expecting it would be for a year or two only. I undertook these duties along with my regular work for the Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches, to which I went in October, 1923. After the first two years, my work for A.C.L.A. had to be done mainly as a sun-down and week-end assignment. I edited *Rural America* on trains and on week-ends. Fortunately, the five-day week came in to aid me.

From 1929 through 1941, I served as secretary, and organized and conducted the annual meeting, often called a national rural forum. I worked under a board of directors and a succession of presidents that included former governor Frank O. Lowden of Illinois; Chris Christensen, of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture; Mrs. Raymond Sayre, prominent in the Farm Bureau; M. L. Wilson and Grace Frysinger of the U.S.D.A., in addition to others, some mentioned earlier in this paper. We usually chose a theme, or general topic, but we had plenty of latitude. E. L. Kirkpatrick led a Youth Section which was often well attended.

When gasoline rationing went into effect in World War II, it was not possible to hold the annual meeting, because it had literally been a conference that depended on rubber tires and gasoline. I also felt then that I must concentrate my energies and should no longer continue to be an officer. Activities were suspended for a brief period only, when the Association renewed activities and still holds an annual meeting.

Free Men, Free Society

• "Creative ideas do not spring from groups. They spring from individuals.... Groups may exploit, change, in some cases even improve upon the creative essence; without it they would have nothing to do." Thus spoke A. Whitney Griswold in the course of the annual baccalaureate address at Yale University, June 9, 1957. This review is written from text furnished by the University.

"Our guiding principle has been the preparation of free men for life in a free society. Few of us, I venture, would be disposed to doubt the theoretical validity of this principle. Yet the times give us all reason for concern over its practical application. . . . The outlook is not encouraging." The Cold War and the attendant fears impel us "to organize to a degree heretofore undreamed of in this land of the free." The organization caused by cold-war strategy follows upon the reorganizations of economic life with the industrial revolution. Thus one contemplates "great corporations, labor unions, agricultural producers' and marketers' associations, and the myriad groups of similar nature, most of them with governmental shadows or counterparts. . . ." "Nor has our passion for organization spent itself in the economic sphere."

"If the individual's exercise of his creative powers is to be systematically curtailed we may ask ourselves, why bother to cultivate them in the first place?" Many educational institutions seem to have given up the attempt to cultivate creative powers and to have emphasized procedures and techniques.

Shall we float with this current tide or resist it? "I hope we shall resist it. I hope you will resist it. And I shall endeavor to give you a few solid reasons for doing so in addition to my hopes."

The trend can be resisted. The makers of the Constitution resisted it. "They accepted the need of organization and devised a form appropriate to the need. They then infused that form with respect and protection for individual freedom and initiative. This is exactly what we must do in our time and circumstances. . . ."

Self respect must be required in spite of endless conferences and "unctious public relations counsels." The historic educational principles of preparation of free men for a free society are thus at a premium. "Again and again in all kinds of occupations individuals educated in accordance with those principles continue to prove their effectiveness in our society, even in the innermost sanctums and strongholds of organization."

—B. Y. L.

Soar in Church Growth

• According to the *1958 Yearbook of American Churches* (National Council of Churches), church and synagogue membership in 1956 increased by more than 3 million for a total of over 103 million—a record 62 percent of our population. The major religious groups were: Protestant 60,148,980; Roman Catholic 34,563,851; Jewish 5,500,000; Eastern Orthodox 2,598,055. The largest Protestant denomination was the Methodist Church with 9,400,000. The boom in church building registered a rise of $40-million over the total rung up in 1955—for a new peak of $775-million.

Spotlighting Church-Community Relationships

W. H. STACY

• Statistics show that church membership is increasing and church support is at an all-time high in the United States. But what of church relationships and influences in the community? Cooperative relationships usually are not spotlighted; they are considered less dramatic and, therefore, less "newsworthy" than are the emotionally charged combative activities. There are reasons to believe that we would make more progress in advancing church-community relationships if they could be more clearly identified.

Learning by Doing

Our nationwide system of cooperative extension work, which has gained favorable recognition throughout the world, owes much of its success to the demonstration method. This capitalizes two axioms: (1) we learn most readily when education is interrelated with what we experience; (2) nothing succeeds like success.

Back in 1929, the Cooperative Extension Service of Iowa State College initiated a plan for translating the "learning by doing" principle, which had been generally accepted in advancing farm and home practices, into procedures that would advance church-community relationships. Operating with state and local church leaders, annual certificate of merit awards were made to "going concerns" in this field.

The first church so recognized was a Roman Catholic church at Panama, Iowa, with Father M. B. Schlitz as leader—who formerly had served as secretary of the Catholic Rural Life Conference. Second was the South Waterloo Church of the Brethren in Orange Township of Black Hawk County—widely known as one of America's great rural churches—which has since received twenty-five additional annual awards of this type.

The purpose stated is "to recognize and encourage the development of vital religious programs that have a bearing upon leadership service and cooperative endeavors which contribute to better living in Iowa communities."

1,442 Awards

These recognitions have now been given annually over a period of twenty-eight years. A total of 1,442 certificates of merit awards have been presented to 547 different churches. The geographical distribution has been statewide. All but one Iowa county is represented by the 547 churches.

Caution has been used not to play one religious group against another: publicity stories do not feature the number annually for the various denominations. However, in this analysis it may be noted that churches receiving recognitions have included: Baptists, 61; Christian (Disciples of Christ), 54; Churches of the Brethren, 16; Congregational Christian, 47; Episcopal, 1; Evangelical United Brethren, 18; Friends, 5; Lutheran, 43—including at least one Missouri Synod; Mennonite, 1; Methodist, 241; Reformed, 3; Roman Catholic, 14; Presbyterian U.S.A., 40; United Presbyterian, 5; Community, Federated and Union churches, 14.

Procedure

The report forms, supplied by the Cooperative Extension Service (Form CDG-12), are designed to serve also as program planning guides. Each focuses attention on what is done during a calendar year period; although this may be part of an ongoing, long-time program. Reports are due on the fifteenth of January, covering the previous year's record.

Promotional and follow-up work has been limited. Responsibilities for the operation are shared as follows:

1. Major policies are shaped by the board of the Iowa Christian Rural Fellowship, which functions as a non-administrative correlating agency for this and other aspects of church and community work in the state. Formed in 1935, its twenty-one directors include professional leaders from major religious groups, together with representatives of farmers organizations, educational institutions and other significant programs related to rural community life. Its president—on alternate years a professional church leader and a prominent lay church worker—signs the certificates, jointly with the director of the state Cooperative Extension Service.

2. The extension sociologist of Iowa State College—who is secretary of the ICRF—working in cooperation with other College personnel, handles many of the procedural aspects of the proposition.

3. State and district church executives, or their rural church workers, make a special point of bringing the matter to the attention of pastors and lay people in local churches.

4. Each year, a follow-up letter is sent to all of the churches that receive certificates and with this there is a suggestion, usually with a new report blank, that the church continue in its efforts to advance programs of rural community service.

5. The college information service staff cooperates in supplying news releases to press, radio and television at the time the awards are made.

6. County extension workers are kept informed of developments and invited to nominate cooperating churches. In some cases they obtain supplies of the report blanks and place them in the hands of church leaders.

7. About 1,000 clergy have associate memberships in the Iowa Farm

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Bureau Federation. Each fall they receive a communication regarding Harvest Home Sunday programs, with some mention also of the church-community service recognitions.

8. Certificates are presented in one of the featured sessions of the Iowa Christian Rural Institute and promotion of this conference includes reference to the church recognitions.

9. Perhaps most important, there are various occasions where person-to-person conferences among interested church and community workers focus attention on this operation.

Growing Interest

During the first 5 years of the plan 1929-34, certificates of merit were presented to 41 different churches, located in 32 counties. In the next 5 year period, 1935-39, awards were made to 97 churches in 60 counties. The number during the war years, 1940-44, totaled 104 in 50 counties. There was an increase to 193, in 79 counties, during 1945-49; and 256, in 86 counties, in the period 1950-54. During the last 3 years, 1955-57, a total of 164 different churches in 77 counties have reported and qualified. There are good reasons to believe that the interest is growing and that the recognitions are becoming more meaningful throughout the state.

One of the unanswered questions is, why don't more of the churches continue to report regularly year after year? Probably it is another case of either inertia or the pressures of other primary responsibilities. Of course, the aim is that of encouraging continued interest in church-community relationships, rather than one of repeatedly "honoring" certain well-established institutions.

The following tabulation shows the number of churches that reported and qualified for more than a single year.

Years	No. Churches
1	256
2	127
3	67
4	46
5	32
6	21
7	5
8	6
9	4
10	3
11	1
12	2
13	1
14	1
18	1
26	1

Many have framed their certificates: they are placed in church entries as year-around reminders. Some have special presentation ceremonies with representatives of the Cooperative Extension Service participating.

Report Specifications

This operation is in itself a "learning by doing" proposition. It started with a simple mimeographed single sheet report outline. Major improvements were made in 1947, after which a printed four-page blank was supplied: this was reprinted in revised form in 1952. A supplementary sheet was added in 1955, asking for more information regarding program planning procedures. The form in current use, a six-page printed guide published in 1957, represents another forward step in emphasizing essential points in developing church-community relationships. It calls for information which (1) Identifies the church, its community area and its principal leaders; (2) Reports the size of the church constituency; (3) States the plans made for the year; (4) Lists projects undertaken and results achieved, with emphasis on "outstanding project of the year"; (5) Reports short time goals and longer range goals; (6) Indicates methods used in program development; (7) Identifies community leadership responsibilities carried by church members; (8) Reports special church services related to rural and community life; (9) Mentions youth programs, other than church, in which young people are participating; (10) Outlines four aspects of the religious programs developed by the church.

Under the latter point it is stated: "Churches do their basic work in the distinctly religious field. While this plan for making Rural Community Program awards features church and community relationships, it is recognized that the major achievements of churches are in the area of its primary responsibilities. Here there are standards that vary with the religious organization of which the church is a part. However, there are certain common endeavors and a church must be effective in developing these major functions to qualify for one of the certificates of merit that are presented at the annual Iowa Christian Rural Institute. Kindly report briefly your programs of: (1) Religious education; (2) Recruiting and training new members; (3) Visitations, by the pastor and by lay members; (4) World service activities.

Awards with Distinction

This is not an operation to pick "champion" churches. Neither is it a plan for honoring outstanding pastors. Always the attention is focused upon how the people of the church function to extend the influence or outreach of the church in the community, noting that in some respects it is a world-wide community.

The reports are appraised by committees of judges, who approve for "Awards of Merit," all that "show balanced and significant programs in the areas covered by the outline." Then they select, for "Awards of Merit with Distinction," five churches "whose records are judged to be most outstanding" in the membership groups having (1) less than 76, (2) 76-150, (3) 151-300, (4) 301-500 and (5) over 500 members. "Honorable Mention Awards" are also provided in 1957 for "an unspecified number of churches whose reports are judged to be distinctly above the average." No church is eligible for the "Award of Merit with Distinction" two years in succession.

The word "rural" is broadly interpreted. A number of the churches reporting are in the open country, some of which are small, but functioning as logical and effective religious centers. On the other hand, several are in county seat towns, having constituencies that include many whose association with rural life programs are chiefly of a service nature.

Five Examples

The churches that received "Awards of Merit with Distinction"

in February 1957, for 1956 programs, included one Methodist, one Baptist, one Church of the Brethren, one Roman Catholic and one Christian (Disciples of Christ). Brief notes regarding each will perhaps be sufficient to illustrate progressive developments that are highlighted by these recognitions.

1. The Webster Methodist Church, near Winterset in Madison County, one in a circuit of three churches served by the same pastor, received highest ranking among those having fewer than 76 members. It reported 69 members—21 of whom had joined at Easter time; 62 enrolled in its religious education program; outstanding achievements in a "Fill-a-Pew" attendance program; commissions on finance, membership and evangelism, missions, Christian education and social concerns; an active Youth Fellowship and a strong church Sunday-school. There is considerable musical ability in the congregation with an adult choir, a junior choir, soloists, duets, quartettes, and sextettes contributing to its services.

Its members include one of the county supervisors, a township trustee, director of a livestock breeders' association, officer of a Saddle Club, three officers of a Garden Club and four school teachers. The pastor served as CROP chairman for a four county area. Eleven of its younger members were in 4-H Club work, four in an FFA group, two in Hi-Y and two in Y-Teens. Various types of cooperative relationships are maintained with the local schools.

Special events of the year included a Rural Life Sunday program in May, a Layman's Sunday program in October and a Harvest Home Sunday program in November. Church members joined forces to repair damages caused by a severe hail storm in August.

2. Among the 14 churches having 76-150 members, whose reports were approved, the Award of Merit with Distinction went to the Baptist church of Hampton. It reported "the best year the church has had for many decades. More members were added to the rolls, more people took an interest in all that was going on."

Members of this church include two Farm Bureau leaders, three co-op elevator leaders, two PTA officers, two Girl Scout leaders, a Cub Den Mother and an agricultural instructor. The church facilities are used for leader training meetings of certain non-church organizations.

It was noted that "most programs of the church are planned by the Board of Deacons, the trustees or the Christian Education Board and then carried out by individuals or committees." The Board of Deacons examines each program that is completed and decides where it might have been improved and where to make changes in the future. The church has a Long Range Planning Committee which is well started on plans for its 100th Anniversary in 1964.

3. There were 29 churches in the group having 151-300 members which were approved for certificates of merit. The Award with Distinction was given to the English River Church of the Brethren, near South English in Keokuk County. With 192 resident members, it conducted two worship services each Sunday and had a religious education program enrolling 219 persons, of whom 134 were over 21 years of age and 30 were people 12-21.

It reported that plans were made at the beginning of the year for six special endeavors:

(1) Stewardship emphasis and growth, through an Every Member Canvas and educational endeavors.

(2) Increased care for aged in the church.

(3) Increased attention to farm placement.

(4) Study of needs in parsonage and church grounds.

(5) Revised plan for church membership.

(6) Music institute and choir in the church.

Progress was reported for each of these programs. Then, in answering the question, "what was the outstanding project of the year?" reference was made to (1) school reorganization assistance in the English River valley area and (2) a state laboratory school of children's workers for Churches of the Brethren in Iowa, which was held at this church.

4. Among the 14 churches qualifying for awards of merit in the group having 301-500 members, the Award with Distinction was made to the S.S. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Clear Creek (P.O. Harper), another open-country church in Keokuk County.

Thirty of its boys and girls in 4-H club work include six officers of local clubs. Also 20 of its boys are in FFA programs (including two officers) and 12 of its girls are in FHA work (including one officer). Its church facilities are used for 4-H Club, Farm Bureau, and Soil Conservation meetings.

Seven young people in this parish have been given help in starting farming. Eleven members carry responsibilities as local Farm Bureau officers, township trustees, soil conservation committee members, and members of local school boards. Four are in the teaching and nursing professions.

Its church projects included a Thanksgiving clothing drive for overseas refugees, support of student centers in colleges, fund raising for polio, Red Cross, Hungarian Relief, and cancer campaigns. Also, plans outlined for the year were achieved with respect to : (1) Church renovation; (2) School improvement; (3) Milk program for the school; (4) Hymn singing and lay director training.

5. Six of the larger churches, having more than 500 members, reported their programs of "Rural Community Service." These were in towns ranging in size from 769 to 2,688 (1950 census population). Selected for highest award was the Christian Church, in the county seat town of Bloomfield. Of its 525 families, 115 live on farms. With a new stone church building, it is one of principal centers for community events in the entire county.

Its membership included: four leaders of 4-H Clubs, seven members of the county extension council and extension committees, 36 4-H Club members, 10 Boy Scouts, 30 Girl Scouts, a director and the

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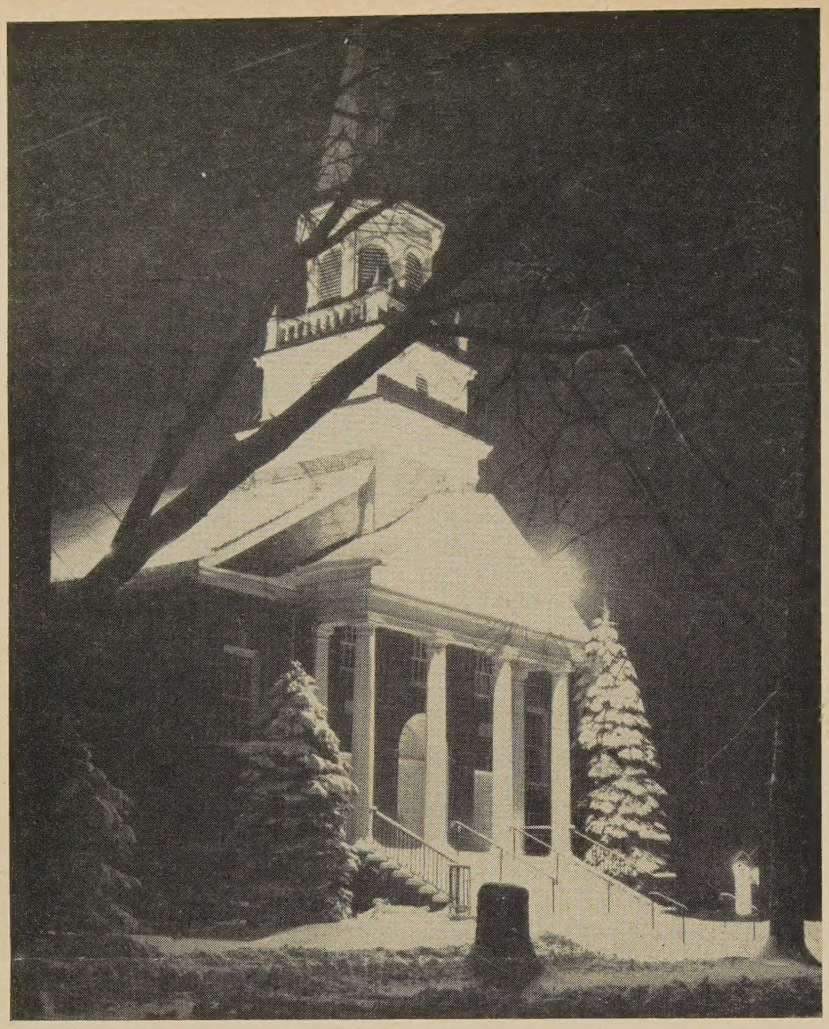


Photo by James D. Wyker

Christian Church, Girard, Ohio

(*Continued from Page* 9)

secretary of the county fair, president of the hospital board and the mutual telephone company, chairman of the REA, 4 members (including chairman) of the board of education, 2 members of the city council, chairman of the Red Cross, 2 presidents and a parent education chairman of PTA's, president of the Davis County Association for Retarded Children, chairman and TB seal chairman for the county TB and Health Program, county Polio chairman, presidents of the local Rotary Club and Lions Club, and various other community leaders.

The church is organized with six functional departments: worship, education, membership development, world outreach, evangelism and stewardship. Monthly meetings are held by these departments and every two months the department leaders meet simultaneously to evaluate work being accomplished and to make additional plans to recommend to the Church Board. Twenty-three of the Board members are farmers or farmers' wives. An attractive four page printed leaflet is published weekly as an aid in keeping families informed regarding significant aspects of the church program.

In reporting the "outstanding project of the year," it was stated: "The fact that this congregation is scattered over a large area necessitated organizing 'The 105' to keep in personal touch with all. Each couple in this group has four families to contact quarterly, or when they have something definite to tell or promote concerning the church. Their success was evidenced by increased church attendance—the best the church has yet experienced—and also by the fact that the 1956-57 fiscal operating budget and the year's building fund financial goal of $35,000 was oversubscribed by nearly $5,000 at a time when the drouth situation in the country looked plenty serious."

How Does It Add Up?

No scientific surveys have been made to evaluate the significance of these annual recognitions. But there can be little debate on the point that, as long as we attach importance to religious motivation for better living and believe that forces for good are interrelated in community life, this is one way of encouraging greater effort to strengthen and advance worthwhile endeavors. Certainly the progress noted is consistent with our prayer that "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."

Brotherhood Week

• World peace is a reward of people living in accord with the principle of brotherhood, President Eisenhower declared in accepting the honorary chairmanship of Brotherhood Week which will be observed February 16-23, under the sponsorship of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The celebration in February marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Brotherhood Week.

The National Conference of Christians and Jews, sponsors of this observance and year-round educational programs, is a civic organization of religiously motivated people seeking:

"To promote justice, amity, understanding and cooperation among Protestants, Catholics and Jews, and to analyze, moderate and finally eliminate intergroup prejudices which disfigure and distort religious, business, social and political relations, with a view to the establishment of a social order in which the religious ideals of brotherhood and justice shall become the standards of human relationships."

In Memoriam

• Edward D. Hamner, Associate Professor of Practical Theology at Phillips University, died October 11, in Enid General Hospital, Enid, Oklahoma, following a lingering illness.

Ed, as we all affectionately knew him, served the rural church and rural people well for a quarter of a century, in spite of the fact that he was only fifty-three years of age when he passed away. He served in several capacities. As a trained religious journalist, he wrote voluminously. Instead of writing for the professionals in the field, he wrote for the common people of the town and country churches—the people whom he felt really counted if the needed changes were to be effected in rural life.

As an ordained minister he served town and country churches exclusively during the time he was engaged in the pastoral ministry and as professor in one of the major seminaries of the Disciples of Christ he gave himself without reserve to the task of inspiring and educating young men to give themselves as he had given himself, to the rural people of America.

Ed Hamner's contribution outside the local parish and classroom have been numerous and significant. For one thing, he was one of the leading spirits of the Disciples of Christ, working and talking for adequate consideration of the rural churches and their problems. Ed was also quite interested and active in interdenominational affairs, and participated in the annual Convocations on the Church in Town and Country.

The hymn Ed Hamner penned in 1942 expresses his life and purpose:

Here on my native soil I live and labor,
Here, close to God and nature's wondrous ways;
Glad in my heart for land and home and neighbor—
Glad for the useful tasks that fill my days.

This is my task: to live and help another;
This is my destiny upon the sod:
That from its yield I feed myself and brother—
And then may give it back enriched to God.

Working with him in common ways and lowly,
In field and wood and pasture land I love,
Knowing my work though humble still is holy—
I bow my head and thank my God above.

—Contributed by Dale W. Medearis

Transportation of Migrant Workers

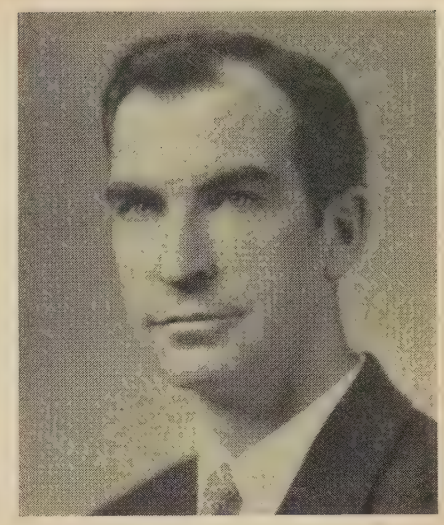
• The Interstate Commerce Commission issued safety regulations effective August 1, 1957, pursuant to Public Law 939 of 1956, which provided for "the regulation of the interstate transportation of migrant farm workers." It has been remarked that for twenty-two years the Commission has been authorized to issue safety regulations for interstate trucks carrying animals to market, but not for the numerous trucks that carried groups of people who stood on these vehicles for long distances. The regulations that appeared on June 17, 1957, were issued after numerous protests by farm employers against the tentative proposals earlier published by the Commission.

The ICC order covers motor trucks crossing state lines if the trip is for seventy-five miles or more.

The Commission remarked on issuing the order: "The record is replete with the tragic consequences of the operation of unsafe vehicles in an unsafe manner. . . . We will keep the entire problem under observation with a view toward further modifications as experience with the present rules dictates."

On June 6, 1957, forty-one Negroes, including migrant workers and their families, were traveling on a truck near Fayetteville, N. C. At an intersection the truck collided with a tractor-trailer. Eighteen persons on the truck were killed. In Colorado fourteen persons traveling in similar manner were killed in an accident.

About the New Chairman



Wesley A. Hotchkiss

• Wesley A. Hotchkiss, the recently appointed Chairman of the National Council of Churches' Department of Town and Country Church, has been a leader in Congregational-Christian rural activities for a number of years.

Born on a farm in Spooner, Wisconsin, Dr. Hotchkiss was educated in the public schools there and Northland College at Ashland. His theological training at Chicago Theological Seminary was interrupted by a tour duty with the U.S. Army when he served as Chaplain on Troop Transport ships in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. After the war he returned to the Seminary and the University of Chicago, where he continued his education and finished his PH.D. degree in 1950.

In August, 1950, Dr. Hotchkiss came to the New York office of the Congregational-Christian Churches to serve as associate to Dr. Thomas Alfred Tripp in the Town and Country Department. After Dr. Tripp's death in 1954, Dr. Hotchkiss succeeded to his present position as Director of the department.

Winter Silhouette

. . . that tangle of twigs!
Who dared trace it there on the
Half circle of moon?

—Beatrice Brissman

Democracy's Growing Edge

• One day in the summer of 1957 Union Pacific Steam Engine No. 407 was maneuvered triumphantly down the flat, hot main street of a southwestern Nebraska town. A trucking concern and an oil company had loaned equipment to move the handsome old engine; the city council had agreed to maintain it in a municipal park; volunteers provided muscles and hands to settle it in its resting place, on a concrete base put down by a construction company.

No. 407 stands as a monument to the colorful history of Sidney. It also represents activity at what people at the University of Nebraska call "democracy's growing edge"—the community. The people of Sidney had formed a cultural committee, which had inspired the formation of a county historical association, which in turn had enlisted the cooperation of businesses, government, and individuals to accomplish something good for the town. The enshrining of No. 407 symbolically represents other less tangible, but even more important, community activities in that and other Nebraska towns.

Almost two years ago the University of Nebraska inaugurated the latest in a long series of programs designed to serve more citizens of the state than just the 8,500 who happened to be on its campus at the moment. In cooperation with the state department of education, and with an initial Carnegie grant of $90,000 (another of $79,200 was recently voted), the teachers college of the University began a program of community development through education.

The idea of helping a community to help itself is not original with the University of Nebraska; community self-improvement projects have been inaugurated in many towns in many states. What is original in the Nebraska undertaking is the idea that one already-functioning community organization, namely the board of education, should be the local coordinating body for the project. This idea rests in the main on the conviction that the school's basic function is the improvement of the community.

It is still too early to say with certainty that the Nebraska people are correct in their belief that this method of organization, with all it implies, will lead to greater and more lasting success in community education. To say for sure, one would have to wait ten years and then visit the towns of Syracuse, York, Mullen, and Sidney. If you visit them today, you will find that they differ from one another in size, geography, economy, personality, needs and problems.

The Farm Town

To go to Syracuse from Lincoln, you can drive due East on U.S. Highway 34 for about twenty-five miles, and then turn South on another road, this one unpaved. You come upon Sycrause rather suddenly, dropping from the crest of a hill into the pretty little town whose people live in comfortable frame houses, each surrounded by lawns, trees, and lilacs which make all other lilacs in the world look puny and pale.

By Nebraska standards, Syracuse is an old town, one of the first to be settled in the state. That makes it about 100 years old. Its own inhabitants number 1,200; in addition, it is a service center for a population of some 3,000 persons. About 600 farm families live in the related rural area. The town itself is physically attractive. It has a good school in a fairly new 12-grade school building, six active churches, a small library, a new and very modern small hospital.

Syracuse is, clearly, a "good town." It has remained alert to the needs of its related farm population as well as to its own. But it has its problems, not the least of them a result of its geographical location. Only 35 miles from Lincoln and 50 from Omaha, Syracuse is too far from the state's only two metropolises to operate strictly as a "bedroom" community; it must instead offer a fairly complete roster of goods and services of all types. On the other hand, it is too close to the big cities to attempt to compete with them in certain areas. Maintaining the proper balance is a tricky business.

Syracuse residents feel the need for a number of additions to their community. A swimming pool ranks high on their list of wants, in addition to other facilities such as parks, playgrounds, and a recreational center. More than half the people of the town say Syracuse needs more industry to provide more work and more income.

The irony is that, in order to solve these problems, Syracuse must solve two others. The town cannot support new industry without a new water supply; it cannot serve an increased population with a rounded educational program without enlarging its school district and broadening its tax base. Under the community education project, Syracuse's residents are approaching these two major problems, and at the same time are solving other lesser ones.

The Farm City

York is about 60 miles west of Lincoln. It is in what is known as the "central transition belt" of the state; that is, between the rich alluvial soil of the east and the rather arid high plateau of the west. The land around York looks like the Nebraska most of us picture: flat as a tennis court, with great fields of corn and wheat stretching out in all directions. There is a lot of livestock around here, particularly poultry.

York itself is a prosperous-looking town of 6,000. Its business section is built around a nice square; new houses are being built on the outskirts of town; there are a few small industries, but in the main York exists for the surrounding farm population. It offers good stores, schools, service clubs and other informal institutions. The Church of Christ has recently established a junior college which soon will have a four-year program.

The people of York are highly ducated. Well over half the population above 20 years of age has graduted from high school, and roughly ne out of every eight adults holds t least a baccalaureate degree. For he past 20 years at least 40 per cent f the high school graduating class as gone on to college; of the class f 1956, 62 per cent enrolled in some nstitution of higher learning.

With a Rural Economy

Like Syracuse, York is a "good" community; also like Syracuse, it has problems, though they are different from those of the little eastern town. It is a community which developed n one set of circumstances but which now must live in quite another. It is the product of an agricultural economy and a rural social structure. Now, however, the general agricultural base that has sustained its economy cannot carry the whole load. What should York do?

Its citizens are not yet agreed on the answer. Many feel that the town should try to attract more industry. Others feel that, although this should be part of the program, it should be only part. They think that York's best hope lies in improving the services already offered and in establishing a cordial relationship with the small towns nearby. Others argue that agriculture is, and always will be, York's basic economic strength. They say the pressing need s to examine closely the present crop pattern to see if new crops could be grown or whether improved methods would produce more and better of the present crops.

The Cattle Capital

You might as well take the aftermidnight train from York to go to Mullen, in the north central part of the state. You are due there at 4:30 n the morning but chances are that the train will be an hour or two late, and so the sandhills will be bathed n broad daylight when you arrive.

The term "sandhills" is literally descriptive. As far as the eye can see, which is a long way in this country, are low hills of sand, absolutely unmarked by a tree or a bush, but thinly covered with indigenous grasses. On these grasses the cattle live, and cattle is the one and only crop of Mullen and the hundreds of miles of sandhills surrounding it.

The town of Mullen, population 750, is the county seat of Hooker County, a fact which is not remarkable when you consider that it is the *only* town in Hooker County, an area about forty miles long and thirty miles wide. When the wind blows it carries sand up the main street and against the low buildings which line the business block: the variety store, the feed store, the commercial hotel, the doctor's and dentist's office, the courthouse. On Mullen's only hill rests its most impressive building, the high school. Most of the town's few trees seem concentrated around the school.

With a New Frontier

As you might expect, the people of Mullen are mainly concerned with physical improvements in the town. They have no thought of attracting new industry, as do the people of York and Syracuse. There is, and there can be, only one industry in their county, and it is a lucrative one. The average size of the cattle ranches is 6,000 acres, but some of them are 100,000 or more.

What the people of Mullen want is better streets and roads (there is precious little pavement in Mullen, not to mention outside it), improved community recreation facilities, a better school plant, a better library. Above all, a hospital. This is the toughest problem of all.

Under the community education project Mullen has already accomplished a good deal, particularly with respect to paving roads and improving community appearances in general. It might seem, from a distance, that the hospital problem is insuperable, but you haven't seen the people of Mullen. They are attractive, vigorous, and tough; their educational level, like that of the people of York, is well above the national average. They seem to embody the characteristics we associate with the old West, of which they are indeed a part: independence, self-reliance, ingenuity.

The Farm and Industry Meet

If you are lucky someone will drive you the 200 miles from Mullen to Sidney, in the southwestern corner of Nebraska. When you finally leave the sandhills you will be in the great winter wheat section of the state. And then, near Sidney, strangest of all phenomena—oil-wells.

It is these oil-wells that have given Sidney its second great impetus to growth in a very few years. Until World War II, Sidney was primarily a distribution center for an extensive wheat-growing area. With the discovery of oil and natural gas in the neighborhood in 1949, Sidney enjoyed or suffered, depending upon your point of view, its second boom. Its present population is about 8,500 (triple what it was in 1940); it will probably level off at from 12,000 to 15,000, though it could go to 20,000 within the next decade.

In a Growing City

The people of Sidney feel plagued by the scarcities that affect most rapidly growing areas. Housing is a serious problem; many families live in trailer homes. While school facilities have been increased rapidly they still are crowded, and will continue so.

Sidney residents say that there are not enough retail outlets in the town, and that the ones there are can't keep enough stock on hand. This, so far as it is a real problem, is a serious one, for Sidney is far removed from any big metropolitan center. Denver is the closest, at 200 miles.

Given its isolated position, Sidney knows it must maintain a full roster of hospital facilities, recreational and cultural agencies, as well as economic goods and services. The people want to enlarge and strengthen all these services, and already have done a good deal in the cultural line.

Despite its problems, Sidney is in a good position to broaden its economic base. It has four major ingredients for doing this: power, a labor force, water, and transportation. The school leadership in Sid-

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(*Continued from Page 13*)
ney is working closely with the community in the process of exploiting and broadening the town's potential.

The University and the Towns

These towns and their problems are different from one another. They do share something in common: a method for organizing to meet their problems. And this method is undergirded by a common philosophy.

Those in charge of the Nebraska project believe that the nerve center for over-all community development should be an agency whose province is the total community, rather than just some part of it. They believe it should have an elected policy-making board, and that its clientele should include everyone in the community. Most important, its activities should grow out of the deepest and broadest currents in the local structure. The school system fills this bill.

Thus, in each of the Nebraska towns, the superintendent of schools is the local coordinator of the project. At the beginning of the project, several committees of townspeople were formed in each community; the chairman of each serves on an over-all coordinating committee. Backstopping the whole operation is the project's headquarters in the teachers college of the university.

Quite apart from the immediate tangible gains to the communities are other benefits. One is that they have a new sense of closeness to their state university and what it can do for them, a knowledge of the agencies of their state government, an appreciation of the state itself. Even more important, they have a new understanding of the real role of their own schools—as the provider, as Dean Henzlik says, of education "not only of the people, but by and for all the people."

—Reprinted from the *Carnegie Corporation Bulletin*, July, 1957

BOOK REVIEWS

The Community of the Future and the Future of the Community. By Arthur E. Morgan. Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio. 1957. $3.00.

Because of his numerous earlier writings one might think that Arthur Morgan is a man who refuses to see the tremendous changes that have occurred during recent years. He has come to be known as one who has given careful thought to the important place that small communities have had in the history of the world and in the development of the United States.

In this book Dr. Morgan turns his mind to the future and indicates some of the things that are happening today that will determine the kind of community life we may have in the future. The first part of the book presents an interesting analysis of those things that combine to make up what we call community today. In summarizing his thoughts about the small community of the future, Dr. Morgan says: "The small community of the future will neither be a replica of the village of the past, nor a surrender to the city. It will be a new creation, uniting the values of both, and largely avoiding their limitations."

The second part of the book discusses some of the factors which will help make this come true. The characteristics of the "new" community will be a combination of the best of the small community and of the metropolitan area of our present time. Community self-reliance, autonomy and occasions for association and participation are essential for real community spirit. In our world, the community must have relations with those beyond its boundaries. Too often national and international organizations and agencies tend to smother individual community initiative rather than stimulate it as they reach into the communities with their plans and programs.

There are chapters on local government, economic life, education, religion and recreation in the community of the future. Dr. Morgan illustrates his points by drawing upon his vast knowledge and wide travels. Thus the reader gets a world perspective as he thinks with the author about the future of the community. What will it be like? What will be its form? What will be its dominant motive? How large will it be? What will be the philosophy that determines its characteristics? These are some of the questions that are dealt with in a variety of ways.

The final chapter, "Through the Dark Valley," points out in a factual and realistic way some of the forces and influences that are now at work to destroy the small community as we have known it. While recognizing the powerful forces that seem determined to eliminate the small community the author continues to think that certain elements in the small community will continue and will influence the community of the future. Recognizing that the essence of community is fulness and fineness of life, in which the motives men live by are those which have our deepest respect, and in which the physical and social settings are most favorable to enduring values, the author believes that man will continue to search for that social arrangement and physical plan of life that will best provide for the flourishing of these values. (He warns, however, that he is thinking not in terms of generations but in terms of millions of years.)

The book is well written, thoughtful, provocative and gives one a sense of perspective which is so desperately needed.

—Richard O. Comfort

Christian Unity: Its Relevance to the Community. By J. Quinter Miller. General Administration—Field Operations, National Council of Churches, New York. 1957. $1.50.

The scope, nature and achievements of the church council move-

nent in American communities, along with numerous suggestions concerning directions for the future, are dealt with in a series of lectures printed in this book. Much of Dr. Miller's thesis may be summed up in the sentence: "The deeper values Christian unity may bring to fruition center in the community." He doubts that our "oneness" in Christ "can be genuinely felt and understood until we experience its meaning in the specific geographical settings in which Christians live and work and worship."

There are now "959 state and local councils of churches, 2056 councils of United Church Women, 95 councils of church men, 2045 ministerial associations. . . ." Yet "the glorious history" of the movement has not been written, according to Dr. Miller, and the impressive program of the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954 did not adequately consider the relevance of Christian unity to the community.

"The current chaotic program situation" is the heading of one of the sections. A minister in Albany lists "the multiple program appeals that crossed his desk." They were so numerous during two months that 'many program suggestions were promptly filed in the wastebasket." The causes of this situation are many and complex.

There is great interest among the people in religion. The needs of the people are also great. Thus we need "newer approaches to program," with intensified coordination and cooperation. This should come about through cooperative program planning.

"The needs of community require an authentic Protestant answer. It will not be uniform; it cannot be proclaimed dogmatically; nor can it be formulated by some ecclesiastical or board agency and then authentically proclaimed from headquarters. Rather the answers must come through the apprehending of God's will by groups of his people gathered in many places from many communions who stand within the ebb and flow of community need and who are attentive to the 'still small voice' that becomes discernible to those who earnestly seek him. The church council movement represents the churches responsible efforts to coordinate these insights and to marshall these resources for the more effective mission and ministry of the churches. In this way Christian unity is made relevant to the community."

—Benson Y. Landis

Faith, Fun, and Fantasy. By Leslie T. Wells. Published by the author at 90 Sound Avenue, Riverhead, New York. 1957. $1.00.

This delightful little book of thirty-five poems comes from the pen of a Long Island farmer, a man who has had "intimate association with the land, the sea around it, the people on it, and with the Lord of life." He is also a man with a keen sense of humor and a refreshing philosophy of life.

Some of Mr. Wells' poems bear such distinctive rural titles as "The Plowman," "Son of the Soil," "The Sea Speaks," "The Migrant." Others —"The Treasures I Keep," "The Way We Disagree," "The Worriers" —show subtle understanding of human foibles. And the following lines are taken from a prayer for faith:

Increase my faith and give me sight
To see my task each day and night;
That inward light may show the way,
And be my guide day after day.

The brush drawings which illustrate this little book are the work of the author's son-in-law, John W. Howard.

—R. B. R.

Faith and Agriculture

(*Continued from Page 3*)

are technicians, not artists, in our attitude toward life, and we shall not recover our artistry until we see life through the sacraments of the Christian faith.

The fourth facet of the faith for our consideration is the concept of the church as the community of redeemed and faithful people.

The church is first of all a community of faith. Whatever else it may be as a social institution is of secondary importance. The church in rural society is not made up of "good" people; it is made up of ordinary sinners whose only claim to life eternal is the grace of God. Therefore, the church is not the self-designated custodian of the petty morals of the community. This is a most appalling aspect of the church in the small face to face community —its stuffy moralism.

The church is a company of reconciled people, and therefore it lives under an imperative to reconcile the total community to God. It also understands that it is reconciled to the natural world through the incarnation, and this becomes the ethical basis of its attitude toward resources.

This is the Church of Jesus Christ to which we all have committed ourselves. The living, embattled, revolutionary and reconciling church which has the eternal mystery of salvation to proclaim. The church in rural America must first recover the essence of its faith and then speak precisely to the real questions of real people in our churches.

Credit Unions

• Members of nine churches of five different faiths recently organized their own credit unions to help each other save regularly and promote thrift, the Credit Union National Association (CUNA) reports. There are now one-half million persons in the 1,370 credit unions that have been organized among religious groups.

Credit unions are composed of small groups of people with a common bond, such as belonging to the same church or parish, who pool their savings and make low-cost personal loans to each other for good purposes. Members own and operate their own credit union under state or federal law with government supervision.

There now are more than 23,000 credit unions with 11 million members in the Western Hemisphere, according to CUNA, the non-profit association of credit unions which has its international headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.

"Just for Today"

1. Just for today I will try to live through this day only; not to tackle my whole life problem at once. I can do things for twelve hours that would appall me if I had to keep them up for a life time.

2. Just for today I will be happy. This assumes that what Abraham Lincoln said is true—that "most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Happiness is from within; it is not a matter of externals.

3. Just for today I will try to adjust myself to what is, and not try to adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my family, my business, and my luck as they come and fit myself to them.

4. Just for today I will try to strengthen my mind. I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

5. Just for today I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress as becomingly as possible, talk low, act courteously, be liberal with praise, criticise not at all, nor find fault with anything and not try to regulate or improve anyone.

6. Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself and relax. In this half hour sometimes I will think of God, so as to get a little more perspective to my life.

7. Just for today I will be unafraid, especially I will not be afraid to be happy, to enjoy what is beautiful, to love, and to believe that those I love, love me.

—Anonymous

Prayer for Brotherhood

• Our God and Father, who hast created all nations, we praise thee. Save us from our prejudices, from our feelings of superiority, from a proneness to mete out revenge, and from fear or any other thing which makes us war with one another. Show us clearly how great is the sin we condone and often boast of, and lead us to the day of world brotherhood. *Amen.*

—Mark Rich

The Neglected Migrant Worker

• Migratory farm workers do essential work in agriculture but receive few of the governmental and community services of the nation, it is stated in a publication, *Migratory Labor Camps in the Community,* issued by the American Society of Planning Officials, Chicago 37, Ill. This is a report issued only to subscribers to the Society's planning advisory service on an annual basis.

The school, medical, and housing facilities of the migrants are inferior to those available to others in the nation. Migratory farm workers are employed in nearly every state of the nation, and all levels of government are responsible for serving these neglected people.

Local governments should at least offer a minimum of service in health, welfare, and education, it is recommended in the report. Planning agencies should provide for camps for migrant workers. State governments should have powers to regulate camps, their size, density, area, water supply, and sewage disposal. The federal government should give adequate information concerning employment opportunities and wage rates.

The Migrant

With dusty feet
We do the work:
The stooping work,
The lifting work,
The picking work,
The dirty work,
The weeding work,
The lonesome work.
And do you shirk
In summer's heat,
In shadows lurk,
While we still work,
The sun-beat work,
The extra work,
The sweating work,
Unceasing work,
The harvest work,
The migrant work,
That you may eat?

—Leslie T. Wells
(Reprinted from *Faith, Fun, and Fantasy*)

The Voice of Greece

• Christians across America are welcoming a new and unusual type of broadcast. *The Voice of Greece* program, just inaugurated over the Mutual network, is a new expository-missionary broadcast sponsored by the American Mission to Greeks, Inc., with headquarters in New York, and featuring the Mission's General Secretary, Rev. Spiros Zodhiates.

Unique in one important respect among Bible expositors on the American scene, Rev. Zodhiates is a Greek who is well acquainted with both modern and classical Greek, who thinks in Greek and draws from the original Greek text of the New Testament all of the richness of meaning of that richest of all languages. Mr. Zodhiates' pleasing voice and refreshing way of presenting his messages projects a captivating personality over the air. Those who have a serious interest in Bible study quickly learn to have pen and paper ready to take notes, even though copies of all messages are offered free and post-paid. After his Greek education Mr. Zodhiates received his college training at the American University in Cairo, Egypt. In America he has received the Bachelor of Theology, from Shelton College, Master of Arts from New York University, and is at present working on his Ph.D. at N.Y.U.

The Bible study period takes about fifteen minutes of the 25-minute broadcast. Following a musical break, Mr. Zodhiates brings an informative and heart-stirring message on conditions in the land of Greece, and in particular centering about the many-sided ministry in that land of the American Mission to Greeks. Few foreign mission enterprises are better equipped to render a full-rounded service to meet both spiritual and material need.

The American Mission to Greeks is registered with the International Cooperation Administration of the U.S. Government—a recognition given only after searching investigation. Through distribution of U.S. surplus food it regularly feeds 6,200 children.